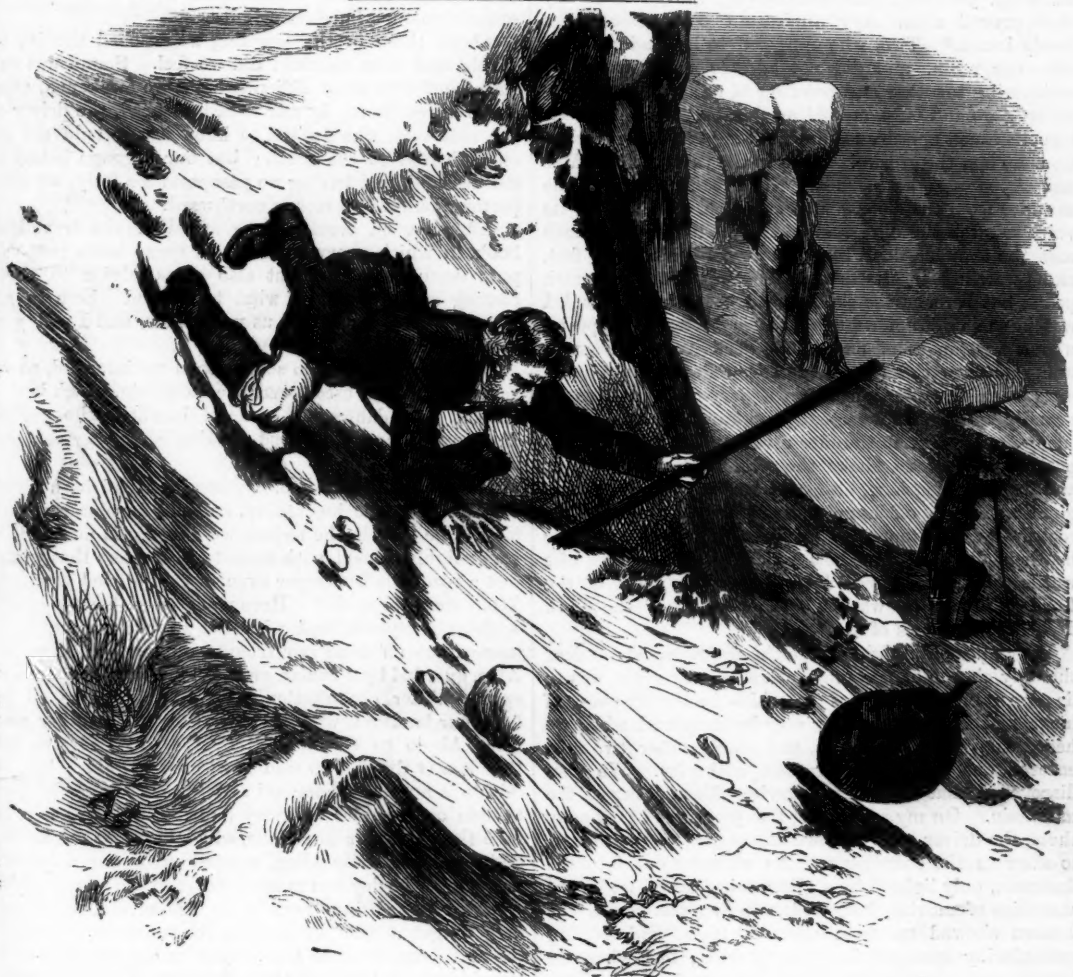


# THE LEISURE HOUR

A FAMILY JOURNAL OF INSTRUCTION AND RECREATION.

"BEHOLD IN THESE WHAT LEISURE HOURS DEMAND,—AMUSEMENT AND TRUE KNOWLEDGE HAND IN HAND."—*Couper.*



A DANGEROUS SLIP.

## LOST ON THE ALPS.

SHOWING HOW WE WENT FARTHER THAN WE INTENDED, AND CAME SAFE HOME AGAIN.

It is a good many years ago now since I was on my way by the Furca Pass to the glacier of the Rhône. Arriving at Hospenthal, or Hôpital, too early in the evening to retire to rest, I and my companion determined to hire a horse, and, riding by turns, we ascended the wild pass of the St. Gothard. The road is most scientifically cut in the solid rock: winding round the buttresses of the mountain, and following the course of

the little tributary of the Reuss, it eventually reaches the plain upon the summit. Here, by the side of a small lake, called Lago di Lucendro, stood a half-ruined house, its stones corroded by the action of frost and stern, and looking the picture of solitary desolation. As we were approaching this wretched *osteria*, the clouds which had been long gathering broke into a terrific storm; so the guide, hurrying us into the doorless entrance, returned instantly with the horse, lest the night should overtake him before he again reached his home.

Ascending a broken stone staircase, we entered a dark paved passage. Hearing a sound of voices in a room on

the left-hand side, we entered, and found a long dirty table and an equally dirty bench occupying one side of the squalid apartment; on the other was a door opening into a half kitchen, half eating-room, crowded with a large party of the most ruffian-like men I ever beheld. In answer to our demands for food, some dark bread, hard cheese, sausage strongly flavoured with garlic, and sour wine were placed upon the dirty table, and we were informed that our supper was ready. Such a supper was not a great provocative to appetite which was, moreover, much stayed by other causes; for the ruffians in the next room had excited themselves to such a pitch by glasses of ardent spirits that they were shouting, jumping, and brandishing knives in a way that proved them very unpleasant companions in a lonely house.\* Two, who appeared to be leaders, came into our room, and did not add to our comfort by whispering together and pointing at us; but, as we had no luggage and only one old mackintosh, I suppose our travel-stained appearance did not tempt closer investigation. Then the storm! Often in the valleys of the Alps and Apennines have I heard the dreadful roar of the thunder from the cloud above me, each echo adding its voice to swell the din; and on the mountain-top I have seen the thunder-cloud like fleecy wool beneath my feet, and watched its harmless lightning from a sunlit peak; but here, on the St. Gothard, being in the cloud, I was in the midst of a huge electric battery. Opposite was a vast mass of snow on a declivity of the mountain, and from this (I conclude, by reflection) the lightning seemed to leap as from a fiery oven, and, as so grandly described, it actually appeared to run along the ground. As the thunder reverberated from peak to peak, it seemed to shake the solid earth with its roar, and by its concussion, either in reality or to my imagination, broke off huge masses from the precipitous rocks. "Cælo tonantem credimus Jovem," said the heathen Roman; but how much more beautiful the words of the inspired Psalmist, "The voice of the Lord is upon the waters," "The voice of the Lord divideth the flames of fire."

It was near midnight before the storm ceased; and, as the only chance of accommodation for the night was to lie down on the benches or tables in the company of inebriated ruffians, our joy may be imagined when we heard the sound of wheels, and shortly after two men entered, one evidently a cantonal authority. We soon discovered that they were carrying the mail across the mountain. On my requesting that we might accompany them, the driver took us down the steps to an outhouse, to show us the conveyance. As we went out into the darkness, only lighted by a glimmering lamp, we heard the noise of moving feet, and, entering the hovel, the lantern showed us most uncouth faces, and shining eyes glaring upon us in every quarter; but, when we became accustomed to the light, we perceived the cause of our astonishment to be a herd of goats, who had here taken refuge from the storm, and were shaking their satyr-like beards at us for intruding upon their retreat.

The vehicle we were invited to inspect was an open cart, with two horses, which, to our dismay, we heard was bound for Italy, instead of Switzerland; but there was no help for it. A board was placed across the cart for our seat, and in thin coats, without luggage, and with one old mackintosh thrown across our shoulders, we descended towards Italy. As the mountain on the southern side is very precipitous, the road is cut into a succession of zigzags. We had no light but the stars, and an occa-

sional flash of distant lightning showed us at times the yawning gulph beneath us. The road was without a parapet, except at the very sharp turns, and the driver urged on his horses at what appeared to us a very dangerous rate. Though many times since I have crossed this path on foot and wheels, the remembrance of this fearful night is stamped the strongest on my memory. At the bottom of a very steep incline we heard the noise of water, and, on stopping the horses, found ourselves in a torrent. A light was quickly struck, and the lamp lighted, and, as the driver was satisfied as to the depth, we safely forded it. Then, turning on an abrupt angle of the mountain, we found ourselves in pine-woods, and felt the warm south wind of Italy most grateful to our semi-frozen limbs.

About three in the morning we reached the inn at Airolo, and most thankful did we feel. Sound was our sleep, and with great difficulty were we awakened, after about three hours, by our friend in need, the driver of the mail-cart, who desired to know if we would not go on with him to the south; but our luggage being in Switzerland, and having no passports for Italy, we were perforce obliged to return northward.

After a good breakfast we asked for the travellers' book, in which every wayfarer in these lands not only puts down his name, but also gives advice to those coming after him as to what to do and where to go. The last entry staggered us very much, and I will give it verbatim:—

"We have left Airolo sooner than we intended, as we have obtained an escort over the mountain, which is now infested by a dangerous horde of banditti, who yesterday stopped and plundered an English clergyman and his son!"

For years the passes of Switzerland had been noted only for generous hospitality, and not for plunder; and (as will be seen in the sequel) we afterwards met, in this very neighbourhood, with honesty in matters that would test a road-side innkeeper even in enlightened England. What were we to do? Here we were without luggage, without passports, and with but a moderate supply of money, cut off from our friends by a range of snowy Alps, guarded by a ruffian crew we did not wish to meet again. After consultation, we agreed to take advice from our landlord, who told us there was another pass from Airolo to Switzerland by the Val Bedretto, but that it was difficult to find it without a guide; but, as Airolo is not like Chamouni and Interlachen, where you tumble over guides at every footstep, we were fain to take the landlord's directions, which he wrote out for us, and, after a friendly adieu, started upon our unknown journey. The day was magnificent, and the snowy peaks sparkled in the bright rays of an Italian sun, which ere long taught us that we were on the southern, instead of the northern side of the Alps. After leaving the main road towards the St. Gothard, the path led us in a westerly direction by the side of a small stream which forms one of the sources of the Ticino. We passed the small village of Bedretto, and afterwards, as we ascended higher, several small hamlets, consisting of a few dirty wooden hovels, very different from the neat and tidy cottages of Switzerland. Black with smoke, and surrounded with dirt, they gave us a very low opinion of the poorer habitations of northern Italy.

One thing, which I have seen since on the northern ascent of the Great St. Bernard, struck us as very singular. Near the higher hamlets were many wooden constructions, looking like gigantic clothes-horses, twenty feet high, the bars of which were hung with sheaves of oats or barley. On inquiring the reason of this

\* On my last visit I found the house abandoned and in ruins.

extraordinary farming, I was informed that in these high upland farms, or rather patches of cultivation, the corn is obliged to be cut before it is ripe, and, being hung up in this fashion, it then obtains the benefit of wind and sun, to bring it nearer to maturity.

The way over the pass becoming more and more difficult, we offered a young lad whom we met some money to guide us to Obergestelen, which we had been told was the first village on the northern side; but, though his black eyes glistened at the sight of the coin, he shrugged his shoulders and departed, leaving us at as great a loss as we were before. After passing all human habitations, we arrived at a large wooden cross, which seemed to mark the division of the lateral valleys, one on the left, and one on the right, while a huge precipice confronted us. "Which road must we take?" was now our anxious question to each other. The right seemed to lead more northerly, but the left showed the semblance of a path; so, unfortunately, we chose the latter. Upwards, still upwards we went, till at last, path and herbage ended, we entered upon the untrodden snow without a guide. We were soon completely bewildered; but we had no recourse but to trudge onwards. At last a huge block of rock, covered with snow, lay across our path; and, as it slanted down an angle of about forty degrees towards a deep abyss, we paused for some time before we attempted the crossing. My friend accomplished it in safety; but, when I was about half-way, the treacherous snow caused my foot to slip, and in a moment I found myself on the verge of a fearful precipice. Tumbling almost head-over-heels, all hope seemed gone, when my alpenstock caught in an interstice of the snow-clad rock, and my downward course was arrested.

Having happily crossed this rock in safety, a most magnificent scene opened to our view. On each side were gigantic precipices; below, a mass of frozen snow; and before us, glaciers and mountain peaks. It was a scene of magnificent desolation.

Fatigue and hunger at last did their work, and perforce we must rest. I found in my pocket a piece of dry bread, which I divided with my companion, and a little snow instead of water completed our meal. This rest was to us the renewing of our strength; and then, seeing a high peak, I climbed it, and joyfully—oh, how joyfully!—called to my friend, still lying on the snow, that it was "all right." Beneath me, towards the north, lay Switzerland with its smiling valleys, and the gigantic peaks of the Oberland; below my feet was an upland pasture, with *châlets* and herds of cows, looking, at the height on which I was standing, like mice upon the plain. Under me was an awful precipice; but, thank God, we were saved. We had at last discovered the pass of the Gries, having wandered from the Nufenen over a land of snows and barren rocks. Brockeden thus describes his view from the Gries of the rocks and glaciers we had thus ignorantly crossed: "Bare and scathed rocks rose on either side in terrible grandeur, out of the glaciers, to an immense height. The silence of the place added greatly to the sublimity; and I saw in the most appropriate spot one of the large eagles of the Alps—the 'lammergeyer'—which was whirling its flight round a mountain peak, and increased the deep emotion excited by the solitude of the scene."

On the southern side was a succession of rocky and snowy peaks, divided by a deep gorge, through which flowed the Tosa, which, lower down the valley, in a vast mass of water, casts itself with a succession of leaps nearly five hundred feet in perpendicular height, covering the rocks with its foam, and making the precipices re-echo with its roar. On rejoining my friend we pro-

ceeded onwards, until we found a break in the northern range, filled up by a glacier, which we afterwards found was called the glacier of the Gries, and which, communicating with the Val Formazza, in Sardinia, is often used by smugglers. Without a guide, we stood on the summit of this glacier, and, though we were feasting our eyes on a land of beauty beneath us, we were quite at a loss how to get down its slippery and precipitous side. At last, walking to the brink, we perceived a stake inserted in the ice, and on reaching it we saw another, a few yards lower. This was succeeded by others; thus tracing an icy path "with cautious steps and slow," we at last arrived on *terra firma*—not *terra firma* to me, for, my foot slipping, I had a most unexpected roll down the grassy declivity that brought me unhurt to the bottom, amongst the cows and *châlets*, almost before my companion had begun the descent. Resting a few minutes, and taking a hasty sketch of the glacier of the Gries I had just descended, I examined the upland plain on which I was standing, and then discovered the great mistake we had made.

I mentioned before that at the head of the Val Bedretto we came to a large wooden cross at the point where two lateral valleys branched off. Here, like Christian and his companion in the "Pilgrim's Progress," instead of manfully breasting the hill before us, we turned off to the left, along what appeared to us the easier and pleasanter pathway, and which, as has been shown, led us at one time to despair of our ultimate rescue. Not that the glacier of the Gries is a difficult pass from the Val Formazza and falls of the Tosa, but it is a very different matter to attempt it without guides from the Val Bedretto.

In case of any reader following my footsteps, I mention that the true pass was to have turned to the right when we arrived at the cross, and ascend a mountain called the Nufenen, which would have enabled us without much difficulty to have arrived at the same spot on which I was standing. On being joined by my companion, we followed a small stream that issued from the glacier, with the semblance of a path on each side. My companion walked on the right hand, and I on the left of this little river. After some time a few rain-drops warned us of a coming storm, which shortly overtook us, and a swollen torrent from the glacier soon effectually divided us; and, as we had to find our way through some Alpine enclosures, we lost sight of each other. After descending the pass for many miles, I at last caught sight of the valley of the Rhône, and that magnificent river flowing here like a tiny brook at my feet. Shortly entering a small hamlet, I inquired for the *auberge* more by signs than by language, as here the peasants speak a miserable *patois* compounded of French, German, and a small seasoning of Italian. I was promptly led to the foot of a ladder, on ascending which I found myself in a rudely-furnished loft, which was the hotel of the village. A little coarse bread and cheese and some spirit and water were placed before me. When a little refreshed, I by signs and words inquired whether any one had seen my lost companion; but no answer could I get; and so, beginning to fear that he had missed his way, I managed to explain to those standing near that I would give the large sum of three batzen, equal to fourpence, for information about him. This turned the tables in my favour, as the sequel will show.

To pay for my meal I laid down a Prussian coin, and asked for change. They all examined it, and I heard them remark to each other that it was silver; but its value puzzled them. At last the landlord asked me to put my own value upon it, and, as I valued it at ten



batzen, he very honestly deducted from it the cost of my meal and the three batzen for the discovery of my friend; then, handing me over the change, he told a little boy to lead the way. Wishing my honest friends farewell, I descended the ladder, and, after ascending the valley of the Rhône for about two miles, the little lad ushered me into the small but comfortable *auberge* of the Cheval Blanc, at Obergestelen, where I found my lost companion cosily taking his wine and dessert, after having, he said, enjoyed a very comfortable dinner. Too tired to do anything else than take a very cursory glance at the pretty village of Obergestelen, situated between four and five thousand feet above the sea-level, we secured a double-bedded room, and shortly retired to rest, after, I trust, thanking in true sincerity our heavenly Father for protecting us through that day. As we had over-taxed our strength, fatigue, instead of producing sleep, brought on a raging thirst. On going to the washstand, I found the jug had vanished, and I had to spend the night, like Tantalus in the fable, in hearing a water-mill splash and waste the element a draught of which would have been so precious to me. In the morning we left the little inn, and proceeded into the valley of the Rhône; but, having no guide, we got lost in a pine-forest not far from the glacier of the Rhône, which is well described in "The Leisure Hour" for 1863 (No. 595). In the middle of this wood we came to a small bridge. While resting upon it, we heard some distant shouts, and saw a man most fiercely gesticulating and brandishing a large stick. As he approached us, we discovered it was the landlord of our hotel, who, first scolding us for losing our way, told us he had traced us for two hours by the herdsman on the mountains, and then asked me if I had lost anything. To my astonishment, he opened his hand and disclosed my gold watch, which I had left under my pillow. I give this as a trait of Swiss honesty, contrasting it with the banditti on the St. Gothard, of whom the authorities of the canton Uri soon cleared the road, these marauders having taken refuge on the Swiss Alps when driven out of Lombardy by the increase of the police of the Austrian Government.

#### AN UNEXPECTED LEGACY.

THE Rev. Thomas Scott, the commentator, records in his autobiography the following remarkable illustration of the text, "He that hath pity on the poor lendeth unto the Lord; and that which he hath given will he pay him again." He also testifies that he received a hundred-fold in spiritual profit from the conversation of his poor pious pensioner.

"I had become acquainted," says Mr. Scott, "as a minister, with a female servant, of whose character I entertained a high opinion, and who was reduced by disease, justly deemed incurable, to the painful necessity of going into a London workhouse (where the society must be peculiarly distressing to pious persons), unless some charitable provision could in another way be made for her. As I was intrusted by affluent and liberal friends with money for such purposes, I proposed to support her for a time, till further medical means could be tried. Her case, however, was soon given up, as beyond the reach of medicine; and it was thought that she could not long survive. Her situation became known to some families in which she had lived; and, with the prospect of aid from them, I received her into my house and undertook her support. From one family in particular, in which she was greatly respected,

I received at least ten pounds a-year on her account. This, with some other helps, enabled me to maintain her without any improper expense to myself. Thus things proceeded till I was preparing to leave London, by building a house on my living; when one of the family just mentioned, to whom I was known chiefly by means of this poor woman, died, and left me a legacy of £200. I still received, for several years, the usual aid for her support, and, at the decease of another member of the family, a further sum of £40. Thus I have had the privilege, and at little charge, for at least seventeen or eighteen years, of preserving from very great distress a poor, suffering, diseased person, whom I doubt not the Saviour and Judge of the world will own at the great day of final retribution as intimately related to himself, and an heir of his kingdom. I would further observe that she had expended all her savings, made in service, upon her aged and distressed parents, in the confidence that God would raise her up friends in case the time should come when she should not be able to maintain herself. Such instances of the faithfulness of God to those who trust his providence, while they obey his commands, seem peculiarly worthy to be had in remembrance."

#### LONDON DRAINAGE WORKS.

IN the number of "The Leisure Hour" for October 3, 1861, we published a map of the new system of drainage for London, with some account of the progress of this important public work up to that date, about three years from the commencement, at the close of the year 1858. Seven long years have now nearly elapsed, and still the grand design is not completed. However, the opening of the southern portion of the great drainage system this year, under the auspices of the Prince of Wales, is sufficient to call for a further notice of this undertaking, in which so large a section of the public are interested.

In describing the work, it is rather puzzling to know at what end to commence, especially as there is really nothing visible of the southern sewage duct above ground, except where, at intervals, a ventilator crops out, like the top of a chimney-stack in a builder's yard. The cost of the whole will be upwards of four millions sterling; and John Bull may well say that he does not see much for his money, most of the works being buried deep in the ground. There is one portion, however, visible and completed, which is the wonder of the age in steam machinery; and, if it be a sample of the manner in which the hidden works are finished, Paterfamilias within the jurisdiction of the Metropolitan Board of Works has no cause to grumble at the heavy rate upon his rental, which he must pay to cover the interest of the money borrowed by that body under an Act of Parliament. On the contrary, we believe that the poorest rate-payer does not grumble at the expense—at least, no one will do so who goes down to Crossness Point to view the gigantic machinery, and the handsome buildings built for the workmen employed in regulating and superintending it. We give the result of our own visit some weeks ago.

Getting out at the Abbey Wood station on the North Kent railway, we have a walk of a mile and a half across the Plumstead Marsh, which is so well drained, and laid out in meadows, with sheep and cattle grazing, that it is a pleasant stroll, partly along a road and a bit of railway used for conveying men and material from Woolwich during the progress of the works. Crossness Point is eleven miles from London Bridge by railway,

and fourteen by water. There is no mistaking the position of the works, as the engine-house rises like a large church, and the chimney, "as high as London Monument," stands out of the level plain. On reaching the spot there is an embankment to ascend about twenty feet, having an area of six acres and a half on the top, where it is perfectly level, with rows of neat small villas on the east and west sides, and the engine-house, with smaller buildings, on the north side, facing the river. Altogether it looks like a newly-built square, somewhat larger than Russell Square, and, like that, it will in time have the centre laid out as a garden. In crossing this square towards the engine-house, one is surprised at the wide vacant area. On reaching the large building, and making inquiry of the polite engineer, he informed us that we were walking across the top of the reservoir, and showed us down a flight of steps leading into this enormous depository, which appeared like an interminable labyrinth of vaulted arches. It had much the appearance of the crypt of St. Paul's Cathedral, only built of brickwork, and, if we could have traversed its whole extent, would have found it ten times larger in its labyrinthine structure. At the time of our visit only one-fourth of this immense reservoir was open to view, the remainder being filled with sewage, and, since then, that portion of it has been flooded; so that, in all probability, no one of the present generation, or of many generations to come, will again see that vast subterranean cloaca empty. Perhaps Macaulay's New Zealander may peep into its ruined cavities and dried-up mounds on his way to London Bridge, and speculate upon the possibility of its having been the site of an English Nineveh.

Into this reservoir the sewage is pumped from a well, at the outlet of the low-level sewer, by eight engines, having an aggregate of one thousand one hundred and forty horse power, capable of lifting a maximum quantity of sewage and rainfall of fifteen thousand cubic feet per minute, a height of thirty-six feet. Nothing in the way of steam machinery can surpass the grandeur of these engines, especially when in operation; and this is the largest pumping station on the Main Drainage Works. They are beam-engines, each beam being forty feet long, and weighing some thirty tons, the cylinders being four feet in diameter, with a nine-foot stroke. The cylinders are supplied from twelve Cornish boilers, each six feet in diameter and thirty feet long. Each engine works two pumps, having a diameter of nearly four feet, and a length of stroke of four feet and a half, the pump-cases being twelve feet in diameter, fitted with four plungers, each four feet and a half in diameter, and weighing from two to three tons, with valves twelve by eighteen inches. Every other part of these engines is on an equally gigantic scale; yet all this "shrine of machinery" works almost noiselessly, and is safely guarded from contact with the engineers by brightly-polished brass rails, that wind up a staircase and along a gallery, thus enabling the visitor to view the working of the engines from every point.

Outside the engine-house is a spacious esplanade on the bank of the river—something like that in front of Greenwich Hospital—where a wharf-wall has been built along the frontage for a distance of about one thousand two hundred feet. The wall is of brick, carried upon brick arches, which rest upon piers formed of iron caissons filled with concrete, and which are carried down to the gravel. Looking over this wall at low water, the outlet of the sewer may be seen, which is so arranged that it can discharge its contents by gravitation, temporarily, should anything go wrong with the machinery. This outlet consists of twelve iron pipes, each

four feet four inches in diameter, carried into a paved channel formed in the bed of the river. These pipes are gathered into the single sewer, which is eleven feet and a half in diameter and eighteen inches thick, by culverts in brickwork on the land side of the wharf wall, the numbers of the culverts being gradually reduced, and their dimensions increased, as they approach the junction of the outfall sewer. Here the sewage is discharged at high water, and stopped long before it reaches low water, so that none of it mingles with the flood tide. This is one of the most important arrangements connected with the works; as it was found, under the old system of a continuous outflow, that the sewage discharged a couple of hours before and after low water mixed with the river in its upward and downward currents, so that it poisoned the stream many miles above London. Now it has been demonstrated by experiment that "the delivery of the sewage at high water into the river, at any point, is equivalent to its discharge at low water at a point twelve miles lower down the river; therefore, the construction of twelve miles of sewer is saved by discharging the sewage at high instead of low water." So that, the southern outfall being eleven miles below London Bridge, the discharge at high water makes it equal to twenty-three miles at low tide on the old system.

Turning from the river frontage, and looking at the external appearance of the engine-house, the design of the building, with the finished character of the brickwork, is equal to that of the machinery, which is still further apparent on gazing up at the chimney, towering to a height of two hundred feet—only two feet less than London Monument. This shaft, into which the flues of the twelve boilers are conveyed, is square externally, but round inside, with an internal diameter throughout of eight feet three inches. The boiler-house is on an equally splendid scale, and presents the improved feature of being the lightest and airiest part of the Crossness buildings, something like a railway station, where the engineers and stokers have plenty of room and daylight to conduct their labours. In front of the boiler-house large coal-stores are provided, into which the coals are brought by a tramway on a level with the boilers, and thence are shot into the stoke-holes below.

From this magnificent pumping-station and outfall the whole of the feeding and main sewers are underground, which is not the case with the northern main sewer at Barking. The effect of this is the absence of any effluvia about the works, except, perhaps, in very hot weather. It is not so at the Barking Creek outfall, where the main drain is open. These works are not yet completed, as they await the construction of the Thames Embankment, which forms a part of the intercepting sewers. There are about one thousand three hundred miles of sewers in London, and eighty-two miles of intercepting sewers. Three hundred and eighteen millions of bricks, and eight hundred and eighty thousand cubic yards of concrete have been consumed, and three and a half millions cubic yards of earth have been excavated in the execution of the Main Drainage Works. The total pumping power employed is two thousand three hundred and eighty nominal horse-power; and, if at full work night and day, forty-four thousand tons of coal per annum would be consumed; but the average consumption is estimated at twenty thousand tons. The total cost of the works, when completed, will be about £4,100,000; this sum is raised by loan, and paid off by a 3d. rate levied on the metropolis, which produces £180,262 per annum, the rateable value being £14,421,011; and the principal and

interest of the loan will be paid off in forty years. The whole scheme is creditable alike to Mr. Bazalgette and the assistant engineers; to Mr. Webster and the contractors; to Mr. Thwaites and the Metropolitan Board of Works; and last, though not least, to the rate-payers, who find the money to carry it out.

#### THE IDLER ON THE RHINE.

##### IV.

COBLENZ, Roman again, the old "confluentes," mispronounced, and melted down into a word which you may spell "Coblentz" without the *t*—which, I may as well tell you, is the right way after all—is half-way between Cologne and Mayence.

Says Baedeker, "No town on the Rhine can vie with Coblentz in the beauty of its situation. It stands at the confluence of perhaps the two most lovely streams in the world," etc., etc. Perhaps. We cannot look at it with German eyes alone. The hotels are comfortable, the waiters active, the trains and steamboats tolerably punctual, and the dinners heavy. But the "Idler on the Rhine" will not stop very long at Coblentz for all that. One especially who has escaped from the great roar of London will not care to linger in this mimic "metropolis," as it is called, and I suppose really is, of the Rhenish province. He will enjoy far more the stroll by the river, the day-dream among the castle ruins, or the lounge at the window of the bankside village inn. Even Baedeker admits that the chief buildings of the place possess no "architectural pretensions." There is a great barrack of a palace in the Neustadt; but the erection which chiefly redeems the town from the charge of dulness is the Castorbrunnen, opposite the entrance of the church of St. Castor. It is a standing incisive joke against the French, who boasted before they put off their armour at the great campaign against Russia. The first, intended to be the last, part of the inscription runs thus:—"An. 1812. Mémorable par la campagne contre les Russes. Sous le préfectorat de Jules Douzan." Unluckily for the credit of this notice, the Russians took subsequent possession of the town, and their general caused the inscription to be completed thus: "Vu et approuvé par nous, Commandant Russe de la ville de Coblentz, le 1 jan. 1814."

The chief objects of attraction to the tourist here are not so much the town of Coblentz as the expedition up the Moselle, and the fortress of Ehrenbreitstein. Of the former I cannot speak, but the trip to Treves is well worth taking, for the sake of seeing the Roman remains there, which are the finest on this side of the Alps. The amphitheatre is in excellent preservation, and you can get from it a grand notion of the way in which the Romans did their pleasure as well as their work. It held fifty-seven thousand spectators—more than three times as many souls as now form the population of the town. Treves, however, is still conspicuous for its spectacle; and the curious philosopher may contrast the influences which drew multitudes together in the old time to witness the savage displays of the heathen arena, and the crowd of pilgrims who flock to see the "Holy Coat," which is the chief "relic" of the place, at least in the eyes of the great bulk of its visitors.

There is a two days' excursion up the Moselle from Coblentz, strongly recommended by the guide-books, and which I now regret that we did not take; but we were idling on the Rhine, and so stuck to the main course of the river.

Every tourist who stops at Coblentz visits the famous

fortress of Ehrenbreitstein. It stands up large and strong and high on the right bank of the river, and, to unprofessional eyes, appears inaccessible; but to such eyes all fortresses seem much alike. There are the same hopelessly smooth walls, from the top of which the assailant is expected to be shot; the same moats with sharp turns, and cannon mouths looking at you round every corner; the same bridges, which open and tilt themselves up on end when you want to cross; the same rows of slits for shooting through; the same sentry-boxes, galleries, and bomb-proof roofs; the same tramp of sentries, and piles of cannon-balls and shells; the same groups of soldiers off duty, idling and chaffing one another, in the sunshine or the shade, as the thermometer may be; the same occasional apparition of an officer, whose appearance chills the mirth of those who are doing nothing, and stiffens the backs of those who are on guard.

Ehrenbreitstein has successfully resisted divers sieges, and yielded only to those two influences, treachery and hunger, which have so often proved themselves more than a match for courage and strength. There is a magnificent view from the top of the fortress, whence the hungry besieged may feast their eyes on some of the richest plains in this part of Rhineland.

We left Coblentz by boat, and a little incident on starting brought so vividly to my mind an assertion I had heard, that nuns were among the merriest of their sex, that I must pause to mention it. The boat had stopped at the pier, taken in its contribution of passengers, and cast loose. I had noticed two sombrely-clad sisters of charity come on board, and was thinking how much their dress among the bustling crowd, though eccentric in our eyes, was a witness to the more thoughtless among those of their own persuasion of a life devoted to high aims. However erroneous their theological opinions, many a sick soldier and poor sufferer in foreign hospitals has learnt to bless the wearers of those melancholy robes for their great tenderness and care. Well, I had fallen into a little parenthesis of reverie after this sort, when one of the nuns burst out laughing, and cried to the captain that she was no passenger, had only come on board to see her sister off, and didn't want to go by the boat at all. We were already cast loose into the stream, but the captain, with gruff comment, ordered the paddles back, had the gangway plank hauled out again, and set the nun on shore. She stood and laughed till we lost sight of her. It was a capital joke. Her sister on board enjoyed it as much as the other, and laughed, too, with an apologetic glance around, as much as to say, "This is really too funny to resist; excuse me." So the tittering pair were separated, and my reverie about the severe devotion, which the dress bore witness to, was somewhat dissipated. I believe that simple weakness is a general accompaniment of exclusive austerity. People who are by their rules shut off from much of the common converse of life feel as great a craving for relaxation as any of us, and relieve it by an excessive indulgence in those manners and habits which are considered innocent, and yet, when uncorrected by the ordinary checks and rubs of life, degenerate into downright silliness. Some nunneries are hotbeds of gossip; the women who have entered them have done so mainly because they felt their life purposeless in the outer world. They have left it to escape from themselves as much as from others, and, besides not being able to do the first, meet a number whose chief characteristic is a distrust of their own powers of self-control. What must be the mischievous effect of sympathy when a parcel of women are drawn together by their inability, real or imagined, to discharge



the common duties of their sex? They cannot bear the irritating presence of worldly life, which obliges them to be continually on their guard against the petty trials and temptations of society. They believe that once in a convent they need not guard themselves so painfully. They commit the direction of their consciences to some priest, who is considered to be in a great measure responsible for their mistake. Thus enervated by a cowardly, or, if you don't like this harsh word, timid flight from the obligations and troubles which press upon them outside the convent walls, encouraged in their selfishness by indulgence in the luxury of detailed ecclesiastical guidance which they find within them, they retain all the weaknesses of their sex, and lose that grace of feminine endurance which is the highest charm of woman. What wonder if they giggle and gossip?

But I must leave the nuns. The steamboat, having severed this tittering pair, shoved its nose out into the current, and paddled slowly through the bridge of boats which here crosses the Rhine. Through the bridge. This is composed of boats lying with their heads up stream, and connected by a broad plankway, which makes an undulating road from one bank to the other. When a large vessel reaches this, two of the boats forming it drop out of their places for a minute and swing on one side, leaving a clear channel fringed with passengers, who are detained in their progress across the bridge. The approach of a steamer is the signal for a general rush of all who are in a hurry to cross, and who scamper along to pass the gap before their path is dislocated. A company of soldiers were crossing when we broke their line of march, and they came along at the double as if they were going to board the boat. But they were just too late; the joint in the bridge fell out as they reached it; and so, checking themselves on the brink of the gap, they grounded their arms in peaceful disappointment till we had passed and the bridge had mended itself once more.

Presently we reached Stolzenfels, which is a modernized royal castle. It is perched upon a rock nearly opposite the spot where the Lahn joins the Rhine. You can go up the left bank of the Lahn by railway to Ems, which is a place much frequented by sick people, who drink the waters, and those who like the small dissipations of these little German towns. Farther on is the town of Nassau.

But we must not get away from the main stream. We stopped for a moment to look up the valley of the Lahn; for tributaries are so rare in the famous Rhine (which sets an example of undivided continuity to the country through which it flows) that their rareness is a boast to those who love the ancient independent river. We have arrived at Stolzenfels, which was presented, some years ago, by the people of Coblenz to the Crown Prince of Prussia, in hopes that he would restore it. The compliment did not cost the Coblenzers much, for, not long before it was given to the prince, it was offered for sale at £11, without finding a buyer. But the compliment was answered after a fashion which encourages cheap politeness. The prince not only took the poor ruined present, but it has been restored right royally, and made a resting-place for the cares of the crown. Now it looks as fresh as if it had been built yesterday; as it ought, for more than £53,000 has been spent upon it. The public are admitted in parties; but, if you have to wait some time before your turn comes, you can enjoy a fine view of the river and its belongings from the corner tower, which stands by the entrance, and which rises from an eminence some four hundred feet above the Rhine. There is an easy road up to the castle, which is

made still easier to those who like to ascend on donkeys. We neither went up nor in; for, to tell you the truth, the dinner was just then put on the table on the steamer's deck, and we preferred eating the fare of subjects to seeing the dining-room of a king. These Rhine-boat dinners are good, though long. The worst of them is that you are witness of the whole prolonged preparations, and smell the smell of the dainties which are being cooked on board. I think the deliberation with which these steamer meals are prepared is intended to serve as a whet to hesitating passengers. First the waiter comes and turns you out of your seat to set out the tables; then the cloth is laid, and plates and glasses are spread. Thus dinner insists on being expected, and, by the time it is ready, most have made up their minds that they may as well share it. You can hardly get out of its way.

The captain took the head of the table, and the second officer sat next him—both hearty, stout personages, who enjoyed their victuals amazingly, although the mate knew his place, and did not fill his glass so full as his superior. His deference was as remarkable as his appetite. It is curious to see how the near vision and presence of dinner blot out all the interest of the tourist in the more distant scenery. They give themselves to the matter in hand, and let the castles and villages slip by without more than that vacant stare which a man with his mouth full so often has. You cannot attend to the river and the dinner at the same time. The company, mostly foreigners—or rather natives, for we sometimes forget that we are foreigners abroad—enjoyed themselves immensely. The patter of the paddles made little concentric rings in our drink, and smut from the funnel occasionally floated down upon the white cloth; but the whole thing was well done, though it lasted too long. We were not sorry when the waiters came to dislocate our tables and clear the wreck off. I think the relics of a dinner which you have helped to eat about as unpleasant to a dined man as its first appearance is agreeable to a hungry one.

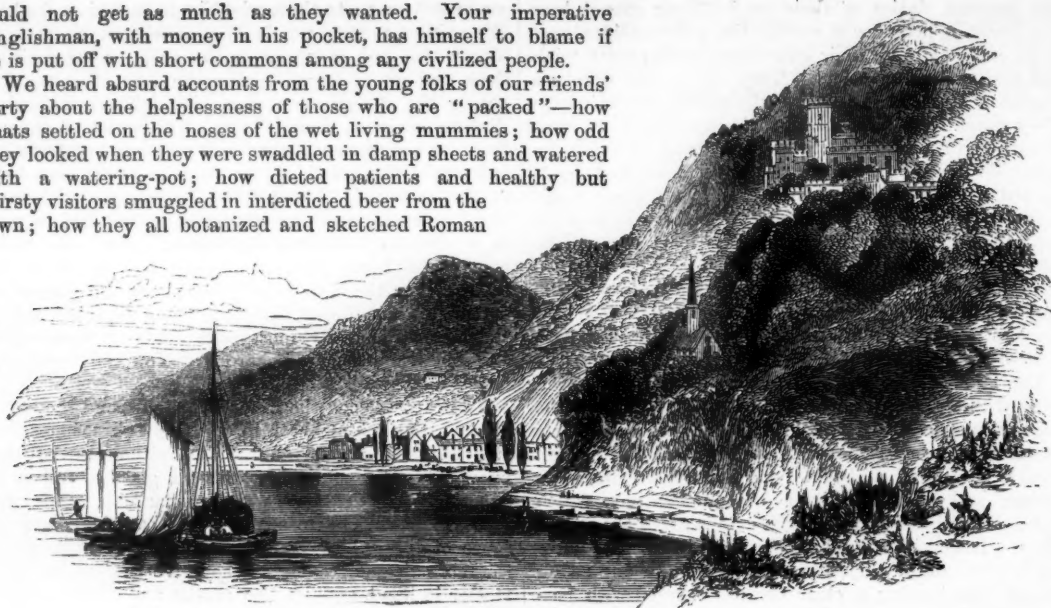
The meal ended, out came guide-books, maps, and all the paraphernalia of sight-seeing once more; and, whatever the scenery, it is then most favourably judged. Give me a comfortable critic. If I must be made a show of, let it be to those who are satisfied with themselves. If I were a ruin, I would be always seen through a kindly after-dinner atmosphere.

Some time after passing Stolzenfels, we reached Boppard, which has the marks of three eras of history upon it. The inner town wall is Roman, the outer medieval, and the place is now best known for its hydropathic establishment and juvenile reformatory.

Some friends of ours, whom we joined at Heidelberg, had stayed a month at Boppard, and apparently enjoyed the odd company one meets at a hydropathic boarding-house. This is the "Marienberg," a large building in an orchard at the back of the town, and which was formerly a Benedictine nunnery. From our friends' account the spot is pleasant enough. You are not obliged to undergo the "cure," but the watery element of the place betrays itself in the fare of the visitors, who complain of the want of solids. Still I cannot help thinking that such a defect would be easily remedied in Germany. There is such a steady national predilection for heavy dinners all over the country that a very little exertion would bring any boarding-house within the atmosphere of substantial eating. No landlord could resist it long if the demand within met the protest from without. Everybody, it seems, eats more than he needs, and it would be hard if hungry visitors

could not get as much as they wanted. Your imperative Englishman, with money in his pocket, has himself to blame if he is put off with short commons among any civilized people.

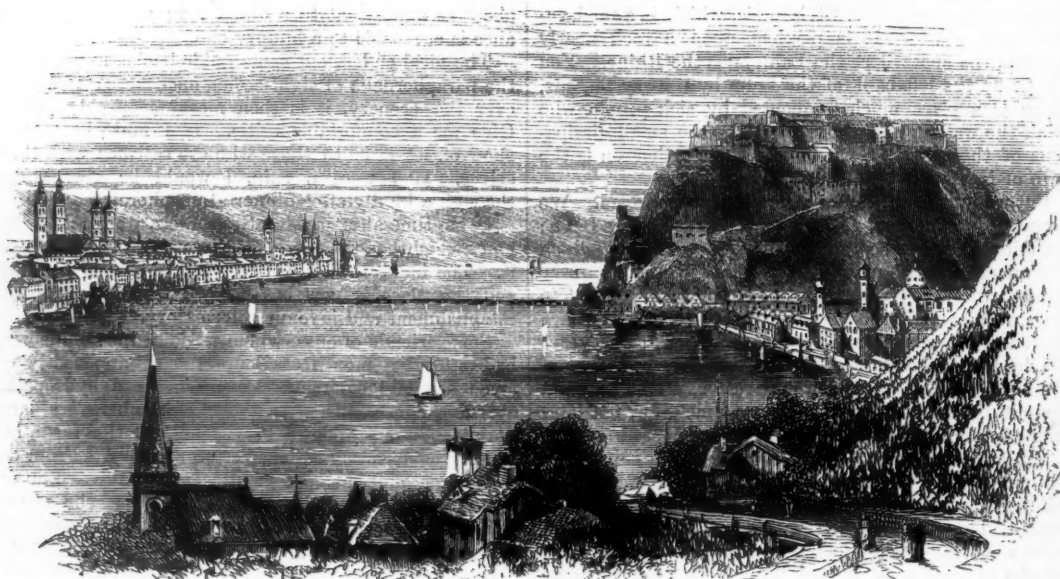
We heard absurd accounts from the young folks of our friends' party about the helplessness of those who are "packed"—how gnats settled on the noses of the wet living mummies; how odd they looked when they were swaddled in damp sheets and watered with a watering-pot; how dieted patients and healthy but thirsty visitors smuggled in interdicted beer from the town; how they all botanized and sketched Roman



STOLZENFELS.

remains; how prettily Professor Sourkraut talked English, distinguishing himself especially in the description of a dying butterfly; how fast the month slipped by, with its small round of daily interests. And I think if any one wanted a few weeks of vacuum, a cheery parenthesis in a busy life, he could not well do better than

the young ladies had the pleasant consciousness of living in a nunnery, with its quaint passages and corridors, and yet at the same time keeping up correspondence with busy England, and a perpetual sensation of picnic, scented with modern science—for the professor knew about everything; and there was the medical element of



COBLENZ AND EHRENBREITSTEIN.

put up at some such place as this, where the air is fine, the excursions not too fatiguing, and the expense small. I forget what they paid, but it was little enough, and

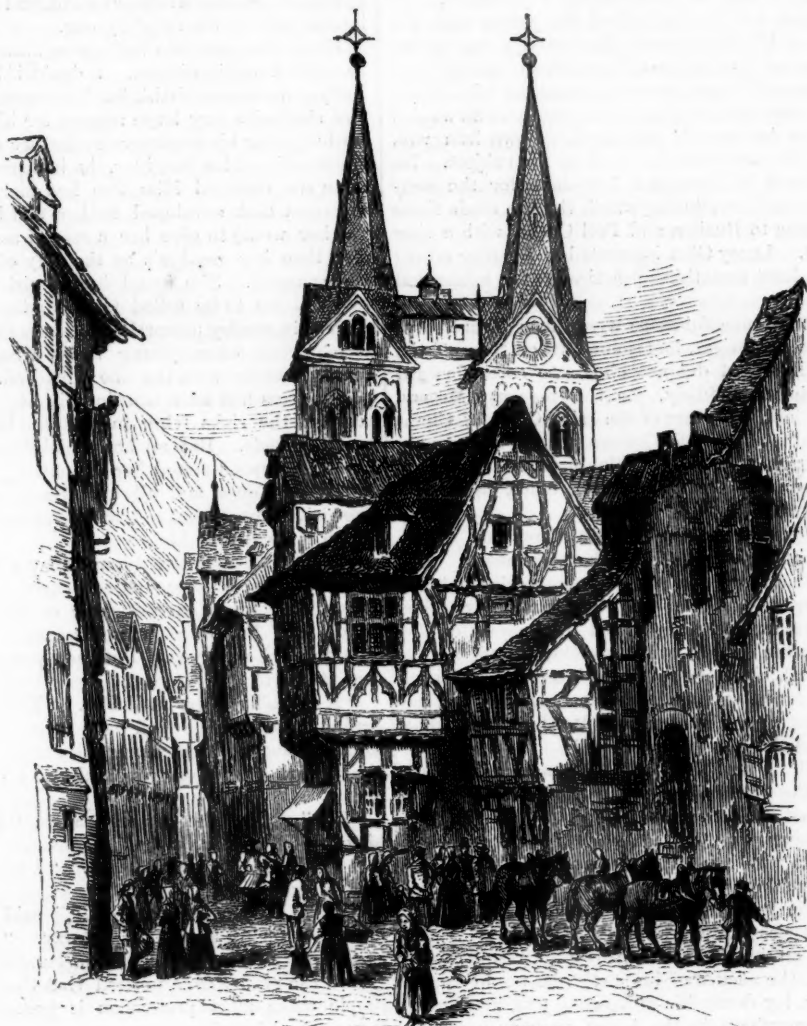
the affair, making its daily moist protest for the enlightenment of the nineteenth century.

Once a nunnery, now a hydropathic establishment;



so the world wags. First cold water on the human affections, and then on the human body. Quacks all! some may cry; but I am sure a great many people I saw abroad, Germans especially, looked as if they would be all the better for a good course at some such sponging-

out there too. Meanwhile Hildegard, who seemed to have fallen between two stools, waited in the castle, until Conrad's return, with a Greek wife, drove her into deeper seclusion. She shut herself up in the loneliest chamber of the castle, and saw no one but her servant.



IN BOPPART.

house as this. If they got nothing else but a good washing and simple diet, they would feel all the better for the treatment.

Some way above Boppard you come to the castles of Sterrenberg and Liebenstein, known as "The Brothers," and joined by a sharp ridge of rock. The legend about them is one of the most familiar on the Rhine. Conrad and Heinrich lived with their father, the knight Bayard von Boppard, in his castle of Liebenstein, and were both in love with their foster-sister Hildegard. Heinrich yielded to Conrad and went on the crusades. The old father built Sterrenberg for the fortunate suitor and his bride. But Conrad, tired of an idle life, and fired with the report of his brother's great deeds in the East, went

One night, however, Heinrich also returned, with a challenge to his brother Conrad. Just as they had crossed swords, Hildegard came forward out of her retirement and stopped the duel. She then went into the convent at the bottom of the hill; Conrad's Greek wife proved faithless; and the two brothers in disappointment lived together wifeless in the castle of Liebenstein. But Sterrenberg, built for the married pair, was left empty.

After passing three or four more villages, the boat bumped against the little pier of St. Goar, and we settled ourselves for a day or two in the "Lily Inn," with the Rheinfels on our left, and the rock of Lurle to our right, on the other side of the swift, shining river.

## THE MAIN CHANCE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "CEDAR CREEK," "THE FERROL FAMILY," ETC.  
CHAPTER III.—OLD KLENCH'S MEMORIES.

Of course Castle Lough had to be sold, since Mr. Lombard advised it. That successful man never suggested anything which was not intrinsically a command. He knew very well how it was behind the scenes with Mr. Sarsfield and his help-meet; that sundry reproaches had to be borne by the gentle gentleman, going back to the very nuptial hour, and sown broadcast with tears; that a fierce first opposition gradually cooled, and waned, and weakened before the might of his own iron will, though he said scarce another word on the subject. He merely remained in Douglas a few days, for the completion of the business, during which time he made those little excursions to Rushen and Peel Castle, with a view to enjoyment. Laxey Glen interested him rather more; there was at least something practical in the mines and the big wheel.

But at last the needful steps were taken: Paul Sarsfield, elder and younger, had joined in cutting off the entail. Mr. Lombard did not choose to come forward as the purchaser, publicly, for the present; Messrs. Odum and Shill, solicitors of the Irish Court of Chancery, managed it all, with the known probity and secrecy of their distinguished firm; which firm made about a thousand a year out of Mr. Lombard's office, and was a very grave of title-deeds.

"And you leave us to-morrow, Mr. Lombard?"

He bowed, and said something about business.

"Oh, we know how the whole county cries out for its moving power," said Mrs. Sarsfield, flatteringly. She had become rather more reconciled to the sale of the ancestral mansion (which was tumbling to pieces for want of repairs), since one result had been an influx of ready money. "How very lonely dear Esther will be without her papa! and oh dear me, Mr. Lombard, what a desolate life you must lead at home!"

"Not at all, ma'am," he replied for answer to both remarks. "I'm never lonely—too much to do; and Esther's a great fool if she is, either. She must stay at school another year—in fact, I shall not know very well what to do with her when she's out of it. So the longer she stays the better."

He spoke the truth here. He could supply all possible contingencies fittingly, except that which would place Esther on his hands, a grown-up young lady. Sometimes, in the silence of his study, he would pause on an evening, lay down his unwearied pen, and fancy her sitting somewhere in the house, perhaps opposite him. He felt that such proximity would make him the reverse of comfortable; he would have nothing to say to her. I fear that something similar had been the case with the deceased mother of Esther. Then he was in the very hurry and strife of his early upward struggle, and every moment not devoted to money-making seemed to him dead loss. He had no time or thought but for the prospects that were opening to his ambition, when he felt within himself the power of getting to himself wealth and name, and stood on the vantage-ground of another man's labours, by means of his wife's fortune. But did he not lose as well as gain in the struggle?

Now he had gotten the wealth and name; so that even while he slept his fortune grew like the trees of the wood, putting forth leaves, and buds, and golden fruit. And who but he was beneficent? who but he was a public benefactor, in permitting the poor to labour for a daily wage in multiplying his riches? Each work he projected was a subject for newspaper glorification,

because of the bread it would bring to subordinates; overlooking the precious metals that it also brought into Mr. Lombard's treasury. None knew more perfectly than himself that this was no benevolence or public spirit at all, but simply the spreading of another net to catch Mammon. He said nothing in deprecation, however; his was a reticent mind, and received the false incense as if it were rightly due.

Even Mrs. Sarsfield had given him some of it, which he did not softly disown. I doubt if the lady was perfectly at her ease with this hard character; but it is certain that she had a very large respect for his success; which led her (after his departure to further successes) to take much notice of his daughter, the heir presumptive. And when the reserved Miss Pen had pierced through the shy crust that enveloped Esther, she began (slowly, as was her wont) to give her a regard as much more sincere than her mother's as the way of evincing it was more rugged. She found in the girl real amiabilities, only waiting to be called forth; indeed, they had been elicited in sundry unworthy instances of boarding-school attachments, when young ladies who had no money carried favour with the one who had. And thus the poor heiress had been learning, in her miniature world, some of the risks lying in wait for her in the larger world outside. But all her amiabilities had leaped to Pen, and turned round her fervently. She was perfect in Esther's eyes, and all her doings were perfections likewise. Pen permitted the homage, like a statue of which is formed an idol.

"You are nearly twenty, and play so beautifully, and yet you practise those odious exercises," Esther said, recognising an advanced stage of the book of music which was her own daily torment. "I am sure I wouldn't if I were you. But then you are so clever, and I so stupid!"

"It doesn't matter," said Pen. "You will have a great deal of money, and I shall have none; so the attraction must be made up in some other way. Besides, I am three years older than you, and also I love music; you don't."

"No," replied the heiress, sadly; "I don't like one bit of my education. I can't be insincere and say I do."

"Very right," observed Pen. "I wish more people were sincere."

"There spoke my own child," said the handsome mother, entering in her languid way. "Of all things on earth I hate insincerity: it is the bane of my existence."

Has the reader ever noticed that the virtue to which people make most pretension is generally that which they possess least?

"And has Esther heard from her dear papa?" she asked.

"No," the girl answered, colouring; "he does not often write."

"Ah! allowance must be made for any person so busy as he is. Life in a constant whirl of excitement and employment. Millions of letters in a year, I suppose," added Mrs. Sarsfield, with a lady's usual vague ignorance of what a million means, "and those of the most horrid kind—all about business. I'm sure the very sight of a business letter makes me shudder;" as is not uncommon with those to whom "business" means simply a demand for money.

The fact about Mr. Lombard's correspondence with his daughter was, that he wrote once a quarter (at the period of the bills) a note of five lines, in his firm incisive words, expressing his hope that she learned her lessons well and took exercise. It was almost a formula; but poor Esther had every one of them locked up in the

jewel-tray of her dressing-case, as the place most precious. Concerning his many journeys, his comings and goings, his enterprises, his daily life, his inner life, this daughter knew no more than a stranger.

Nobody knew. Old Klensch, the chief clerk, who had been also chief clerk to Mr. Estridge, and confidant of all his affairs, would scarcely have raised his eyebrows to hear from reliable authority that his chief had turned up at Moscow or Buenos Ayres. If business was to be transacted in either of those cities, he would do it, and that without any person needlessly knowing of the journey. This reticence had sorely affronted old Klensch at first; but he found that he had only to submit. He, who remembered Mr. Lombard as a rawboned youth, to whom he taught book-keeping by double entry, and whom he had sent a thousand messages—he was quietly, silently, put out of council. He dare no more open one of his chief's letters (he used to read all Mr. Estridge's) than he dare forge his signature for a thousand pounds; for Mr. Lombard had no privy council, held no consultations: he was self-reliant enough to reign alone.

Yet old Klensch knew more about him, and of him, than anybody else. Once, since the days of his power, had the clerk seen him discomposed—what the French truly call *hors de soi*. It was when the news came of the birth of Mr. Estridge's son, the child of his old age. Ralph Lombard had stamped his foot, and crushed up the letter passionately. "Then there's an end of everything," he exclaimed, with livid lips; "this infant will inherit all." He had gone into the house to tell his wife, and Klensch, bringing some papers for his signature two hours afterwards, found him sitting over the fire with his head on his hands. The face raised up to speak to him was singularly pale and haggard; for he had just been seeing all the visions of his ambition crumble away like a cinder-castle in the flames. But he had recovered himself somewhat in the interim, and by next post went a letter to the retired draper, at his pretty villa on the Bay of Dublin, of a congratulatory nature, Klensch doubted not; for he knew that Ralph Lombard was always very sensible, and would go to the christening and stand godfather to the baby- heir, if necessary, which indeed he did. A sorrowful christening it was; for the young mother had not recovered, though at first she promised fair for recovery, and the old man's grief was frantic. It tended, probably, to shorten his own days. Scarce would he let the infant out of his sight; he made a will leaving almost all his property and a large interest in his late business to the child; Klensch was one of the witnesses, Lombard was nominated guardian. But all this care was hardly necessary; for, three months after his old father's decease, the little heir sickened and died also. He had never been a strong child; and so the reversionary clauses of the will came into operation, and Ralph Lombard could be king alone, instead of viceroy or regent.

He looked upon it as a great danger tided past; and what could shake him on his throne of money-bags now? Year after year piled success upon success; if failure ever came near him, it was only to prove the more conclusively how clever he was, and how completely Fortune was his slave. Did he ever think of the Power higher than fortune, I wonder?

#### CHAPTER IV.—MR. LOMBARD'S ORIGINAL.

FROM Douglas he had gone to Liverpool, preferring this route (as on his arrival) to the steamer line from Dublin to Whitehaven, "calling off" the beautiful Manx harbour. Doubtless he had a reason for this, as for all other of

his actions and modes of action. Perhaps it was to avoid the rough water of the Race, which gives passengers so cruel a shaking near the Calf of Man, and which is not pacified on the tranquil summer's day; neither has it respect for money-bags. Perhaps it was that he wanted to call at a certain small house in Little Primrose Street, Liverpool.

It was not so named because of any proximity to the flower, which could not have grown there, even in a window-box. So closely set were the houses, that rarely did the sun get a chance of looking right down among them. A shadow in the street was next to impossible, simply because a sunbeam was so; and yet it was all shade.

The inhabitants did not seem to mind, though medical men talk so much of the healthful power of sunshine. They flourished and were happy in Little Primrose Street as elsewhere. They went occasionally in search of fresh air to New Brighton and Waterloo. The neighbourhood was considered very favourable for business, which means that much money was turned over there; and this reconciles sensible people to a great deal. A roaring tide of human life (muddy, it must be admitted) filled the narrow channel during daylight, and far during gaslight also. The shops with which it was lined drove a thriving trade, though such blandishments as plate-glass and brilliant paint were unknown—perhaps despised. Dingeness was rather a recommendation in Little Primrose Street, as seeming a pledge of long established solidity. There were no emporiums or marts; not even a warehouse. The Saxon word "shop" was in full force, and considered respectable still.

That recommendation of dingeness was written upon no house in the thoroughfare more decidedly than on the place known as Chippen's. Twenty-five years might have passed since a painter's paper-cap looked at it. The inscription over the door, setting forth that Chippen dealt in old books, was nearly effaced by age and by dust washed down over the words. But new books would have been so unsuitable to the establishment, that one had no difficulty in supplying the adjective. Through the grimy panes were dimly visible rows of calf-bound volumes. Their gilding hardly made sunshine in a shaded place, being grievously fly-spotted. A stand at the door held volumes in sheepskin, volumes in boards, volumes in tatters. The last-mentioned had "Your choice for Sixpence" emblazoned on a bit of card in a cleft stick, planted among them like the mark of hidden annuals in a spring garden. Whether anybody was ever tempted into choosing, Mr. Chippen knew.

The neighbourhood had its own gossip about Chippen. *On dit* that he occasionally found bank-notes in his old books; *on dit* that he was a regular miser; *on dit* that he hadn't fourpence to jingle anywhere; *on dit* that he had a hundred thousand in bank stock. If so, he didn't show it, certainly. He was standing this evening at his shop door, perhaps considering whether it was time to take in the stand with its bait of literature. Though the sunshine was very far above him indeed, gilding alone the eccentric shapes of the chimney-pots, he put his hand to shade his eyes as he looked up and down Little Primrose Street. They were eyes that an enemy might have called bleared; a red rim was round each of them, like spectacles. But they did their duty as well as the handsomest. They saw afar off this evening some person who arrested their attention. Mr. Chippen slightly pushed up his fur cap with the shading hand. "It's Ralph," he said, and ceased looking, but addressed himself to the removal of the stand and the old books. He merely drew it inside with much



creaking. Then he went to a little glass door, covered with a greenish curtain (except the upper panes), and looked within.

"Oh, you're there. I only wanted to say Ralph's coming, that's all. I saw him just past the turn." And he shut the door on some feminine exclamation, and a rustling of petticoats.

Certainly that perpetual movement about the old man's mouth was anything but attractive. He never ceased twitching his lips in some way, though they were always closed. Now, when bending over his till, and reckoning up the gains of the day with his long lean hands, that mouth executed almost as much motion as the fingers, which it was in nowise called upon to do. There was not much money to count, and a majority of copper pieces.

"Gimcracks," muttered he, in a soliloquy; "gimcracks is the taste of the day. They must have every colour in the rainbow, instead of the good sober bindings that satisfied 'em long ago. New editions, forsooth! Calico and varnish! I wonder what would become of me only for the copy-paper and slate-pencils. I must try a few valentines next season."

To him entered—while he was spreading old newspapers over his calf bindings in the window, and thereby making matters snug for the night—to him entered the firm, ringing tread of the successful man.

"How d'ye do, uncle Chippen?" and in his own stout grasp he took the old man's placid fingers for a moment.

"My mother in, eh?"

This, then, was Ralph Lombard's home; this the obscure original whence he had developed. Perhaps his enemies (a successful man always has such) would like to have been in the secret with the reader—those of them, at least, who would have considered self-help an aspersion.

And Ralph Lombard's mother was decidedly a vulgar person. She had great difficulty in keeping the letter *t* on her perfect tenses. Her grammar was nothing particular, though she lived close by a temple of the purest literature—and of the eldest draught—in her brother Chippen's shop. Withal, she had a strongly sensible, well-pronounced countenance, like her son's, too marked to be handsome in any sense; nevertheless, not without its share of characteristic attraction. A radiant delight overspread it now, as every pulse of her mother-heart beat fuller at sight of her first-born.

There was not much demonstration, however. In a minute or two she was knitting again—Mr. Lombard wore none but her socks—as quietly as if he were nobody in particular, except that her eyes scarce ever left the tall figure that leaned against the mantel-piece. She had not seen him for nearly six months. It will be perceived that he did not call in Little Primrose Street every time he came to Liverpool; but then his appointments were so numerous, his business so pressing, and she never could hear of the omissions.

As to her, it is not too much to say that he was her day-dream, her idol. The earliest thoughts of the morning, the latest of the night, were given to the distant son who had become such a great man. He sent her papers containing the local incense. She was proud of him. She was satisfied to stay in obscurity and sordidness while he lived abroad on the sunny uplands of wealth and repute. She sketched pictures to herself of the grandeur she never beheld, nor would behold. "What! is it thy old mother go disgracing thee! No, no, Ralph, I'm not a lady; I'm only a poor woman. It befits me to stay quiet for the rest of my days. I can't talk like the gentle-folk, nor couldn't ever sit quiet with

my hands before me in a drawing-room doin' nothin'. An' thee'll be grander without me, Ralph." She would not even have walked down Bold Street, or Lord Street, beside her son, for any consideration. And he was satisfied it should be so.

They had been talking for some time, and the old man rummaging in the shop outside (which made an undercurrent of noises like rats in the wainscot), when Mr. Lombard asked, after a pause—

"Well, how's the boy?"

"Joe? oh, quite well. Middlin' boisterous, but keepin' good on the whole. I wonder he's not in; it's full time," she added, glancing at a clock in the corner, which was nothing but a square china face with dependencies. "Deary me! but how ever did I forget the hour?" She put by her knitting in a bustle, and opened a cupboard door fixed in the wall. "Sure it's time to give you your tea, Ralph dear—leastways, if you can take it in a humble place like this. But though it's I that say it, that hadn't ought to, mayhap you never get a better brewin' of tea at home than your old mother's. It's the earthenware teapot does it, Ralph, an' nothin' else. An earthenware teapot on a coal; that draws the leaves beautiful—you might take pure water off them afterwards."

He let her talk on, without much heed; for he had turned his face so that it leaned on his arm on the chimney-piece, and his eyes, steadfast, sombre, looked into the place where the fire would have been in winter, but where now was nothing but a heap of paper streamers over the bars. And the mother, going about her clattering tea-cups with a tray on which was delineated a faded shepherdess, held her peace after a little time, observing his abstracted attitude, and knowing that his thoughts were busy in the big world about great financial matters far beyond her ken, or about the House of Commons, perhaps, or even some affairs of the Queen's. There was nothing too lofty for her Ralph not to be associated with now. Had he ever been a small round-headed child at her knee? She stilled the clinking of the cups before his reverie.

Was it about great financial matters, I wonder? Was it rather about a certain home department of years ago? Time is not yet to withdraw the curtain.

The fidgeting had ceased in the outer shop for a while back; and now the glass-door was pushed open by Mr. Chippen, admitting a very strong odour of the sea, as represented by marine productions. He had a grey paper-bag in his hand, which, when emptied on a plate, evolved shrimps, and another in his pocket containing periwinkles. "And so we'll have a feast to-night," he said, rubbing his flaccid hands. "One doesn't mind extry expense when a friend comes," with a glance of the red-rimmed eyes at his nephew.

The truth was, that the lady presiding over the shell-fish always asked Mr. Chippen more than anybody else, being well assured that he would beat down her prices to a corresponding extent; so that he had the pleasure of a bargain without the profit, which was just the same in its moral effect. He was quite gleesome over the shrimps. "Ain't they a picter?" he said, when they had been laid out on a green cabbage-leaf. But his pleasure was quite equalled by that of another person coming suddenly, and with some rough exclamation.

Joe was reproved, and bade to look at the company which he did. "He won't leave a single wrinkle of the lot," said old Chippen. "A dreadful boy for eatin', Ralph. You wasn't near so bad at his age. And there's reason in everythin'."

The visitor was taken up with gazing at the boy, so that perhaps he did not hear this description of his appetite—a short, thick-set, sturdy lad, with strong rebellious hair in tufts, and a pair of audacious eyes under his low, wide forehead; brown hands, scarred and scratched in every conceivable way, as from a variety of encounters; a wild, wilful face, with elements of generosity in it; the sort of boy who gets into innumerable difficulties through impetuosity of temper; who is the darling of mothers and sisters for his manliness, though it is so largely alloyed with indiscretion as to keep them in continual dread of some catastrophe. But poor Joe Rickaby had neither mother nor sister.

All the notice he took of Mr. Chippen's oburgation was to burst into a fit of the heartiest laughter, quite unabashed by the stranger's presence. "So I be! so I be!" he exclaimed. "A great 'un for winkles I be! Let's have at 'em with a pin!" brandishing a long yellow one, extracted from some part of his raiment.

"Does this boy go to school?" asked Mr. Lombard, in a freezing tone. "Because I never heard the English language so mangled."

Joe was abashed now. His bold, bright eyes fell under the gentleman's glance. He said not a word, but thrust the pin up and down into the bread on his plate, as if it had been a pin-cushion. He might be excused for nervousness under a glance that had so little love in it.

#### THE ROYAL ACADEMY.

THE following account of the origin and early history of the Royal Academy is given in Mr. Thornbury's "Haunted London":—\*

Germes of this institution are to be found as early as the reign of Charles I, when Sir Francis Kynaston, a translator of Chaucer into Latin (circa 1636), was chosen regent of an academy in Covent Garden.

In 1643, that shifty adventurer, Sir Balthazar Gerbier, who had been fellow-ambassador with Rubens in Spain, started some quack establishment of the same kind at Bethnal Green. He afterwards went to Surinam, was turned out by the Dutch, came back, designed an ugly house at Hempsted Marshal, and died in 1667.

In 1711 Sir Godfrey Kneller instituted a private academy, of which he became president. Hogarth, writing about 1760, says that sixty years before some artists had started an academy, but their leaders assuming too much pomposity, a caricature procession was drawn on the walls of the studio, upon which the society broke up in dudgeon. Sir James Thornhill, in 1724, then set up an academy at his own house in Covent Garden, while others, under Vanderbank, turned a meeting-house into a studio; but these rival confederations broke up at Sir James's death, in 1734.

Hogarth, his son-in-law, opened an academy, under the direction of Mr. Moser, at the house of a painter named Peter Hyde, in Greyhound Court, Arundel Street. In 1739 these artists removed to a more commodious house in Peter's Court, St. Martin's Lane, where they continued till 1767, when they removed to Pall Mall.

In 1738 the Duke of Richmond threw open his gallery at Whitehall, closed it again when his absence in the German war prevented the paying of the premiums, was laughed at, and then re-opened it again. It lasted some years, and Edwards, author of the "Anecdotes," studied there.

In 1753 some artists meeting at the "Turk's Head," Gerard Street, Soho, tried ineffectually to organize an academy; but in 1765 they obtained a charter, and appointed Mr. Lambert president.

In 1760 the first exhibition of pictures was held in the rooms of the Society of Arts, and in 1761 there were two exhibitions, one at Spring Gardens; for the latter Hogarth illustrated a catalogue, with a compliment to the young king and a caricature of rich connoisseurs.

In 1768 eight of the directors of the Spring Gardens society, indignant at Mr. Kirby being made president of the society in the place of Mr. Hayman, resigned, and, co-operating with sixteen others who had been ejected, secretly founded a new society. Wilton, Chambers, West, Cotes, and Moser were the leaders in this scheme, and Reynolds soon joined them, tempted, it is supposed, by a promise of knighthood.

West was the chief mover in this intrigue. The Archbishop of York, who had tried to raise £3000 to enable the American artist to abandon portrait-painting, had gained the royal ear, and West was painting the "Departure of Regulus" for the king, who was even persuaded and flattered into drawing up several of the laws of the new society with his own hand.\* The king in the meantime, with unworthy dissimulation, affected outwardly a complete neutrality between the two camps, presented the Spring Gardens society with £100, and even attended their exhibition.

The king's patronage of the new society was disclosed to honest Mr. Kirby (father of Mrs. Trimmer, and the artist who had taught the king perspective) in a very malicious and mortifying manner, and the story was related to Mr. Galt by West, with a quiet, cold spite peculiarly his own. Mr. Kirby came to the palace just as West was submitting his sketch for "Regulus" to the king. West was a true courtier, and knew well how to make a patron suggest his own subject. Kirby praised the picture, and hoped Mr. West intended to exhibit it. The Quaker slyly replied that that depended on his Majesty's pleasure. The king, like a true confederate, immediately said, "Assuredly I shall be happy to let the work be shown to the public." "Then, Mr. West," said the perhaps too arrogant president, "you will send it to my exhibition?" "No!" said the king, and the words must have been thunderbolts to poor Kirby; "it must go to my exhibition."† "Poor Kirby," says West, "only two nights before, had declared that the design of forming such an institution was not contemplated. His colour forsook him—his countenance became yellow with mortification—he bowed with profound humility, and instantly retired; *nor did he long survive the shock!*"

Mr. West is wrong, however, in the last statement, for his rival did not die till 1774. Mr. Kirby, a most estimable man, was originally a house-painter at Ipswich. He became acquainted with Gainsborough, was introduced by Lord Bute to the king, and wrote and edited some valuable works on perspective, to one of which Hogarth contributed an inimitable frontispiece.

Sir Robert Strange says much of this intrigue was carried out by Mr. Dalton,‡ a print-seller in Pall Mall, and the king's librarian, in whose rooms the exhibition was held in 1767 and 1768.

Thus an American Quaker, a Swiss, and a Swede—a gold-chaser, a coach-painter, an architect, and a third-rate painter, like West)—ignobly established the Royal Academy. Many eminent men refused to join the new

\* Galt's "Life of West," pt. ii. p. 25.

† Ibid. pp. 36–38.

‡ Strange's "Enquiry into the Rise and Establishment of the Royal Academy" (1775).

\* Haunted London. By Walter Thornbury. London: Hurst and Blackett, 1905.

society. Allan Ramsay, Hudson, Scott the marine-painter, and Romney were opposed to it. Engravers (much to the disgrace of the Academy) were excluded; and, worst of all, one of the new laws was that no artist should be eligible to academic honours who did not exhibit his works in the Academy's rooms: thus depriving for ever every English artist of the right to earn money by exhibiting his own works.\*

The proportion of foreigners in the Academy was very large. The two ladies who became members (Angelica Kauffmann and Mrs. Moser) were both Swiss.†

The unlucky incorporated society, deprived of its share of the St. Martin's Lane casts, etc., and shut out from the Academy, furnished a studio over the Cyder-cellars in Maiden Lane, struggled on till 1807, and then ceased to exist.

The first officers of the new society were—Joshua Reynolds, president; Moser, keeper; Newton, secretary; Penny, professor of painting; Sandby, professor of architecture; Wale, professor of perspective; W. Hunter, professor of anatomy; Chambers, treasurer; and Wilson, librarian. Goldsmith was chosen professor of history at a later period.

The catalogue of the first exhibition of the Royal Academy contains the names of only one hundred and thirty pictures: Hayman exhibited scenes from "Don Quixote," Rooker, some Liverpool views; Reynolds, some allegorized portraits; Miss Kauffmann, some of her tame Homeric figures; West, his "Regulus" (that killed Kirby) and a Venus and Adonis; Zuccarelli, two landscapes.

In 1838 (the first year of the National Gallery), there were, including busts and architectural designs, 1382 works of art exhibited. Among the pictures then shown were—Stanfield's "Chasse Marée off the Gulf-stream Light;" a great coarse picture of "The Privy Council," by Wilkie; portraits of men and dogs, by Landseer; "The Pifferari," "Phryne," and "Banishment of Ovid," by Turner; "A Bacchante," by Etty; "Gaston de Foix," by Eastlake; Allan's "Slave Market," Leslie's "Dinner-scene from the Merry Wives of Windsor," "A View on the Rhine," by Callcott; Shee's portrait of Sir Francis Burdett; portraits by Pickersgill; MacIse's "Christmas in the Olden Time," and "Olivia and Sophia fitting out Moses for the Fair;" "The Massacre of the Innocents," by Hilton; and a picture by Uwins.‡

Angelica Kauffmann and Biaggio Rebecca helped to decorate the Academy's old council-chamber at Somerset House. The paintings still exist. Rebecca was an eccentric, conceited Italian artist, who decorated several rooms at Windsor, and offended the worthy, precise old king by his practical jokes. On one occasion, knowing he would meet the king on his way to Windsor with West, he stuck a paper star on his coat. The next time West came, the king was curious to know who the

foreign nobleman was he had seen—"Person of distinction, eh? eh?"—and was doubtless vexed at the joke.

Rebecca's favourite trick was to draw a half-crown on paper and place it on the floor of one of the ante-rooms at Windsor, laughing immoderately at the eagerness with which some fat Bubb Doddington of a courtier in full dress, sword and bag, would run and scuffle to pick it up.\*

Fuseli took his place as Keeper of the Academy in 1805. Smirke had been elected, but George III, hearing that he was a democrat, refused to confirm the appointment. Haydon, who called on Fuseli in Berners Street in 1805, when he had left his father the bookseller at Plymouth, describes him as "a little white-headed, lion-faced man, in an old flannel dressing-gown tied round his waist with a piece of rope, and upon his head the bottom of Mrs. Fuseli's work-basket."

Elsewhere the impetuous Haydon sketches him vigorously. Fuseli was about five feet five inches high, had a compact little form, stood firmly at his easel, painted with his left hand, never held his palette upon his thumb, but kept it upon his stone slab, and being very near-sighted and too vain to wear glasses, used to dab his beastly brush into the oil, and, sweeping round the palette in the dark, take up a great lump of white, red, or blue, and plaster it over a shoulder or a face; then prying close in, he would turn round and say, "Dat's a fine purple! it's very like Correggio;" and then all of a sudden burst out with a quotation from Homer, Tasso, Dante, Ovid, Virgil, or the Niebelungen, and say, "Paint dat!" "I found him," says Haydon, "a most grotesque mixture of literature, art, scepticism, indelicacy, profanity, and kindness. He put me in mind of Archimago in Spenser."†

When Haydon came first to town from Plymouth, he lodged at 342, Strand, near Charing Cross, and close to his fellow-student, the good-natured, indolent, clever Jackson: The very morning he arrived he hurried off to the exhibition, and mistaking the new church in the Strand for Somerset House, ran up the steps and offered his shilling to a beadle. When he at last found the right house, Opie's "Gil Blas" and Westall's "Shipwrecked Sailor Boy" were all the historical pictures he could find.

Sir Joshua read his first discourse in 1769. Barry commenced his lectures in 1784, ended them in 1798, and was expelled the Academy in 1799. Opie delivered his lectures in 1807, the year he died. Fuseli began in 1801, and delivered twelve in all.

It was on St. George's Day, 1771, that Sir Joshua Reynolds took the chair at the first annual dinner of the Royal Academy. Dr. Johnson was there, with Goldsmith and Horace Walpole. Goldsmith got the ear of the company, but was laughed at by Johnson for professing his enthusiastic belief in Chatterton's discovery of ancient poems. Walpole, who had believed in the poet of Bristol till he was laughed at by Mason and Gray, began to banter Goldsmith on his opinions, when, as he says, to his surprise and concern, and the dashing of his mirth, he first heard that the poor lad had been to London and had destroyed himself.

It was while Reynolds was lecturing at Somerset House that the floor suddenly began to give way. Turner, then a boy, was standing near the lecturer. Reynolds remained calm, and said afterwards that his only thought was what a loss to English art the death of that roomful would have been.

\* Pye's "Patronage of British Art," p. 134.

† The original thirty-six Academicians were—Benjamin West, Francesco Zuccarelli, Nathaniel Dance, Richard Wilson, George Michael Moser, Samuel Wale (a sign-painter), J. Baptist Cipriani, Jeremiah Meyer, Angelica Kauffmann, Charles Catton (a coach and sign-painter), Francesco Bartolozzi, Francis Cotes, Edward Penny, George Barrett (Wilson's rival), Paul Sandby, Richard Yeo, Mary Moser, Agostino Carlini, William Chambers (the architect of Somerset House), Joseph Wilton (the sculptor), Francis Milner Newton, Francis Hayman, John Baker, Mason, Chamberlin, John Gwynn, Thomas Gainsborough, Dominick Serres, Peter Toms (a drapery-painter for Reynolds, who finally committed suicide), Nathaniel Hone (who for his libel on Reynolds was expelled the Academy), Joshua Reynolds, John Richards, Thomas Sandby, George Dance, J. Tyler, William Hoare of Bath, and Johann Zoffani. In 1773 Edward Burch, Richard Cosway, Joseph Nollekens, and James Barry (expelled in 1797) made up the forty.—*Warren's Preface to the "Lectures on Painting."*

‡ Royal Academy Catalogues, Brit. Mus.

\* Smith's "Nollekens," vol. i. p. 391.

† Life of Haydon. By Tom Taylor. Vol. i. p. 30.



When Mr. Wale, the Professor of Perspective, died, Sir Joshua was anxious to have Mr. Bonomi elected to the post, but he was treated with great disrespect by Mr. Copley and others, who refused to look at Mr. Bonomi's drawings, which Sir Joshua (as some maintained, contrary to rule) had produced at Fuseli's election as Academician. Reynolds at first threatened to resign the presidency.

Turner's name first appeared with the title of Professor of Perspective attached to it in the catalogues in 1808. His lectures were bad, from his utter want of language, but he took great pains with his diagrams, and his ideas were often original. On one celebrated occasion Turner arrived in the lecture-room late and much perturbed. He dived first into one pocket and then into another; at last he ejaculated these memorable words: "Gentlemen, I've been and left my lecture in the hackney-coach!"\*

In 1779, O'Keefe describes going to Somerset House to hear Dr. William Hunter lecture on anatomy. He describes him as a jocose little man, in "a handsome modest" wig. A skeleton hung on a pivot by his side, and on his other hand stood a young man half stripped. Every now and then he paused, to turn to the dead or the living example.†

Fuseli succeeded Barry as Lecturer on Painting, in 1799, and became Keeper on the death of Wilton the sculptor, in 1803. He died in 1825, aged eighty-four, and was buried in St. Paul's, between Reynolds and Opie. Lawrence, Beechey, Reinagle, Chalon, Jones, and Mulready followed him to his stately grave. The body had previously been laid in state in Somerset House, his pictures of "The Lazar House" and "The Bridging of Chaos" being hung over the coffin.

When Sir Joshua died, in 1792, his body, chested in a black velvet coffin, lay in state in a room hung with sable in Somerset House. Burke and Barry, Boswell and Langton, Kemble and John Hunter, Townley and Angerstein came to witness the ceremony.

#### OUR PET TORTOISE.

"Will you not buy a tortoise, sir?" said our fishmonger the other day, addressing me as I approached his stall. "Here's a plenty now in the market, and I can sell you one for a shilling. Pick where you please." I found, on inquiry, that my neighbour, Mr. B—, who is, like myself, a lover of natural history, had become a purchaser of one of these little animals; and, recollecting how much amusement one of the species had afforded to that admirable naturalist, White of Selborne, I determined to put one into my garden, that I might watch its proceedings.

For some time after he was inducted into his new domain, poor Totty, as my daughter calls him, was terribly shy. No sooner did he catch sight of either of us than he drew in his head with evident alarm. It appeared to us that his hearing was by no means acute, for he evidently did not receive warning of our approach through the medium of that sense, and when we came upon him from behind he remained unaware of our proximity; but the instant we moved forward sufficiently for him to catch sight of us, he shrank into his covering.

One thing rather surprised me: when I occasionally paid

him an early visit before breakfast, I found him more than once abroad on his peregrinations, seemingly examining the bounds of his territory, and much disposed to make his way to the only available outlet, the garden gate. On referring to the account given by White, I find that his "family tortoise" had a similar propensity, and that he explored every wicket and interstice in the fences, through which he would, if possible, make his escape. In this he sometimes succeeded, and more than once he was discovered by the gardener wandering in a distant field. In the matter of food, we soon discovered that our tortoise knew pretty well how to take care of himself. He cropt the small clover, and certain weeds he found on the grass-plot, giving the preference to the dandelions, which were here and there scattered about. Having been advised to give him lettuce, we tried this, but he seemed not to prefer it. For drink we offered him milk, and milk-and-water; but this was not so acceptable as water, of which he drank eagerly, even while we stood near. By degrees he seemed to become more sociable, and would even eat any tit-bit we offered him, if hungry. It was evident that he would soon be familiarized; in fact, we quickly learned that it was not a difficult matter to overcome the natural shyness of the creature. Our neighbour, Mr. B—, has a large family of young children, who were delighted at the idea of a new pet; they seized upon the tortoise as soon as he arrived, and quarrelled for the privilege of carrying him in their arms. Even the youngest would hug him close like a baby; and the moment a friend came to call, the tortoise was brought in triumphantly to be exhibited. "It has no chance of being shy," said our good friend: "the children take care to prevent that; and our favourite kitten, an animal of most extraordinary liveliness—being a half-bred Frenchman—has completed what the youngsters so well began. She mounts upon the back of the tortoise, and pats his head most familiarly, making use of him, beside, as a convenient stool; for, while the creature is drinking, Puss, perched on his back, comfortably laps her share of the milk over his head."

I have not yet discovered that either of these tortoises shows a preference for one individual more than another. Perhaps this may be owing to the fact that no person has the special charge of either; for Mr. White says that his animal showed its sagacity in discerning those who waited upon it, hobbling with alacrity to meet the old dame who brought him food, while it remained quite inattentive to strangers. "Thus," says the good man, "not only the ox knows its owner, and the ass its master's crib, but the most abject reptile and torpid of beings distinguishes the hand that feeds it, touched with the feelings of gratitude."

This seems, however, not to be always the cause of affection, even in tortoises. Some years ago I was in the habit of visiting two aged women, who were confined by growing infirmities to their chamber. A relative abroad sent to one of them a parrot and a tortoise. The tortoise, strange to say, attached itself pertinaciously to the other woman, who was a complete cripple, and unable to move from her chair. The animal would always make its way to the place where she sat, and nestle close by her side, while it showed no disposition to friendly feeling for its real owner. The cause of this predilection could not be discovered, and much puzzled the worthy couple. Certainly there was nothing repellent in the neglected woman, for she was by far the more amiable of the two, and the parrot became so fond of her that when she died it pined away and moped; nor did it survive her more than a few weeks.

\* Thornbury's "Life of Turner," vol. ii. p. 107 (a careless book, but still containing much curious, authentic, and original anecdote).

† O'Keefe's "Life," vol. i. p. 386.

The other day I was mentioning our tortoise to a friend who has travelled abroad. He told me that on one occasion, when he was journeying in Syria, he came early one morning upon a little herd of tortoises; there might be about thirty of them in all, congregated in a green and moist meadow, and they were busily engaged in cropping the herbage, which was remarkably verdant and tender.

It appears that these animals, while they feed largely during the summer season, eat comparatively little in the spring and fall of the year. Early in November they begin to dig the ground, in order to form the "hybernaculum" in which they are destined to pass the winter, completely buried beneath the mould, not emerging until April, when they heave up the earthy covering which has sheltered them from the wintry cold, and put out the head, by-and-by reviving sufficiently to come forth and walk about like creatures newly risen from the dead.

How often have we cause to lament the death of our pet animals, many of which are naturally short-lived, and subject to injury more or less severe from accidental or other causes! He who would secure himself as much as possible from such liabilities should choose the tortoise for his pet, as the animal is securely lodged in a shell almost impervious to all attacks, and from its habits peculiarly unlikely to come to harm. The extraordinary longevity of the creature is, besides, almost as proverbial as its slowness, and it is said sometimes to live more than a hundred years. In the palace at Lambeth there is preserved the shell of a tortoise which was placed in the garden attached to the bishop's residence during the time of Archbishop Laud, and, as nearly as can be gathered from its history, about the year 1633; it continued to live there until the year 1753, when it was supposed to have perished more from accidental neglect on the part of the gardener than from the mere effect of age. This tortoise had the honour of being commemorated by the Rev. W. Derham and many other writers; so that its history is well authenticated.

The species of the tortoise family are numerous and diversified. Some of them are of great size. With reference to the habits of these animals, some very interesting particulars are given by Mr. Darwin in his "Journal." This distinguished naturalist some years ago paid a visit to the little craters in the Galapagos Archipelago. The weather was glowing hot, and he found scrambling over the rough surface and through the intricate thickets very fatiguing. But, he says, "I was well repaid by the Cyclopean scene. In my walk I met two large tortoises, each of which must have weighed at least two hundred pounds. One was eating a piece of cactus, and when I approached, it looked at me and then quietly walked away; the other gave a deep hiss and drew in his head. These huge reptiles, surrounded by the black lava, the leafless shrubs and large cacti, appeared to my fancy like some antediluvian animals." Mr. Darwin is of opinion that these tortoises are found, probably, in all the islands of the archipelago. He says they are surprisingly large and fat, and much valued for the delicacy of their flesh, which is eaten both fresh and salted. They prefer the high damp parts, but likewise inhabit the lower and arid districts. The tortoise is very fond of water, drinking large quantities, and wallowing in the mud. In some of these islands the springs are found only in the central parts, and the animals, therefore, which frequent the lower districts are compelled to go a considerable distance to water. Hence broad and well-beaten tracks are made in every direction from the wells to the sea-coast, and the Spaniards, by

following these paths, first discovered the watering-places. Mr. Darwin says, "When I landed at Chatham Island, I could not imagine what animal travelled so methodically along the well-chosen tracks. Near the springs it was a curious spectacle to behold many of these great monsters: one set eagerly travelling onwards with outstretched necks, and another set returning after having drunk their fill. When the tortoise arrives at the spring, quite regardless of any spectator, it buries its head in the water above its eyes, and greedily swallows great mouthfuls, at the rate of about ten in a minute. The inhabitants say that each animal stays three or four days in the neighbourhood of the water, and then returns to the lower country. When moving towards any definite point they travel by night and by day, and arrive at their journey's end much sooner than would be expected." Our author adds that he frequently got on their backs, and then, upon his giving a few raps on the hinder-part of the shell, they would rise and walk away. But he found it no easy matter to keep his balance.

Some years ago an individual of this gigantic species was presented alive to the museum of the city in which I live. It was an object of great interest to the curator, who took vast pains to secure the comfort of the animal in the matter of food and warmth. Poor D——! there was never a more simple-hearted and devoted being in his own peculiar line. His "specimens," dead and living, engaged all his thoughts; and really he had no sinecure of it, what with the insect pests that visited his cases, and the necessities of his live favourites, one of which, a voracious gannet, never saw him approach its stand without uttering a horrible cry, apparently indicative of mingled hunger and rage. "Ah, dear me!" I have heard him say, when thus assailed, "I'm sure we do our possibles to get that creature victuals. I've been to the river this morning for fish, and had to break the ice after them; but it appears he is not satisfied——" a fearful yell and flapping of the wings cut short the poor man's speech.

What became of the gannet I know not, but the fate of the tortoise was lamentable. For two or three years all went well; he became quite domesticated, and dragged about poor D——perched on his back round the inclosure in which he was kept, apparently quite to the satisfaction of both parties; but at length there came an unusually cold season. The winter set in bitterly cold, and D—— became anxious for the safety of his tortoise, now in his winter "hybernaculum," a box lined with wool, etc. To secure sufficient warmth, the zealous curator, not satisfied with the usual precautions, wrapped the unfortunate sleeper in thick blankets, fold upon fold, and carefully excluded the external air. In process of time the season of spring returned, and D—— went to unpack his favourite. Alas! the creature was dead, fairly smothered, killed with kindness.

It seems strange that even the larger tortoises should be able to bear the weight of a man upon their backs; but one cannot help feeling surprised to learn that one small species (the *T. clausa* of Linnæus), though it rarely exceeds four or five inches in length, is so strongly defended that it is uninjured by a weight of five or six hundred pounds, and is able to walk under this heavy load. This little animal has the power of withdrawing its head and legs, and so accurately closing all the parts of its shell together, as to be perfectly secure from injury. It is a native of many parts of North America. Our common land-tortoise is supposed to be a native of almost all the countries bordering on the Mediterranean, and to be more frequent in Greece than in other regions.